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Ahikar, we find no such expression, but only the expression "king of the Assyrians;" nor do we find the country spoken of, at least in the Vatican text, by the curious double title? When, however, we begin to examine the Sinaitic text, we find traces of the very same expression; thus:

Tob. 14:4, καὶ ἀπαντήσῃ ἐπὶ Ἀθήρ καὶ Νινευή

Tob. 14:14, ἐν πᾶσιν οἷς ἐποίησεν ἐπὶ τοὺς υἱοὺς Νινευή καὶ Ἀθουρείας, which shows that the Sinaitic text is derived from one which described the empire as it is described in Ahikar.

Probably this is also the explanation of the peculiar Vatican reading of Tob. 14:4,

τὴν ἀπωλίαν Νινευή [ἣν ἡχμαλώτισεν Ναβουχοδονοσορ] καὶ Ἀσύηρος, where Ἀσύηρος looks very like a corruption of Ἀθὺρ or Ἀθουρείας, and the bracketed words are either a gloss or a displacement. Next turn to Tob. 14:4 and observe how, in the context, the Sinaitic text has preserved another original trait in the expression: τῷ ῥήματι τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπὶ Νινευή, ἃ ἐλάλησεν Ναούμ, ὅτι πάντα ἔσται καὶ ἀπαντήσῃ ἐπὶ Ἀθήρ καὶ Νινευή. It has long been recognized that Ναούμ and not Ἰωνᾶς is the true reading in this place. The Sinaitic, then, is the better text, and it either represents the original Semitic more closely than does the Vatican text, or has been corrected from the original Semitic.

But what Semitic text was it? Hebrew or Aramaic? There can only be one answer in view of the forms Ἀθὺρ and Ἀθουρεία. They are not Hebrew, but Aramaic.

We have thus arrived at a fairly conclusive demonstration of the superiority of the Sinaitic Tobit, and of the existence in it of elements derived from the Aramaic. And we have obtained further evidence of the close literary parallelism of the two stories, Ahikar and Tobit.

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#### THE EDICT OF TOLERANCE OF LOUIS XVI. (1787) AND ITS AMERICAN PROMOTERS.

THE war of the Camisards had shown that the Huguenots in France were unconquerable by brute force. The most powerful king of Europe must use persuasion and bribery in order to bring about the pacification of the Cevenol mountaineers. Besides, Antoine Court, Benjamin du Plan, Jacques Roger, and their coadjutors in the work of the restoration of the Protestant church had proved by their steadfastness that the fear of the galleys, or even of death, could never force

them to give up their right to public worship. During sixty years they had performed divine service every Sunday and holiday in the Desert and in private houses, and had held their synods and "colloques" in spite of bloody edicts. And, in fact, the governors of Languedoc after Lamoignon de Basville and the judges in the courts of parliament (except that of Toulouse), under the influence of public opinion, had adopted more humane ways of dealing with the Protestants (as we have seen from Paulmy's meeting with Paul Rabaut, the apostle of the Desert), and the barbarous ordinances of 1715, 1724, and 1745 were maintained only to frighten them. However, while in fact the position of the Huguenots had improved somewhat, legally it remained still intolerable. In the eyes of the law they were considered as outlaws. Their marriages, unless they had been celebrated by the Roman Catholic priests of the parish, were regarded as concubinages, and their children as bastards, and hence unable to inherit, so that not seldom avaricious collateral relatives claimed the heritage of the Huguenot father at his death, and tried, in pursuance of the law, to rob his widow and orphans. Moreover, it sometimes happened that unfaithful husbands left their wives under the pretense that they had been married only by Protestant ministers in the Desert, and refused to give any support to them and to their children. Such was the case of Marie Robequin, of Grenoble, who was abandoned with her children, and for whom Attorney-General Servan made such an eloquent speech. Let us say, however, in honor of the French magistrates, that, generally speaking, except in the parliament of Toulouse, they showed themselves more tolerant than the laws, and that they rendered sentence rather according to their natural sense of justice than according to the edicts. Gilbert de Voisin, Malesherbes, and Baron de Breteuil in his memoirs on *Marriages among the Protestants*, were perfectly aware of the injustice of the legal position of the Huguenots in France, which, after 1746, induced so many to emigrate.

Rupert de Montclar, attorney-general at the parliament of Aix, in a remarkable pamphlet of 1755, after having explained all evils brought about by the "clandestine marriages" of the Huguenots and the loss suffered by the kingdom of France in consequence of emigration, made the following exclamation: "In spite of all the hardships they endure, the Protestants work with one hand for the prosperity of France, while with the other they are wiping away the tears which persecution draws from their eyes. How long, then, shall we molest a great people whose labor is so useful to us, whose industry is so valuable,

whose faithfulness so well tried? Is it not time to stop this kind of captivity under which they have been groaning for seventy years in their own country? That is what every good Frenchman expects from our gracious majesty! But somebody will object that they are stray sheep. Astray indeed; but they are good citizens, and for that reason alone the government ought to esteem them and to win them back. Astray; but they are secure in their belief, and we ought the more to be convinced of this, as the severity of the laws could not sever them from their religion. Astray; but their errors are in their minds only, not in their hearts, and they violate neither the right of the king nor the duties of society. Astray; but why should we not now try with them the ways of gentleness? Astray; but do you think that the persecuting which Europe attributes to our religion gives it much credit? Astray; but let us cease to be inconsistent in praying to God for their conversion, while with the same breath we invoke against them the sharpness of the civil power."

This eloquent plea for toleration was not heeded till thirty-two years afterward. We may say about the foundation of religious liberty in France what Virgil has said of the foundation of Rome:

*Tantæ molis erat Romanam condere gentem.*

It required the greater part of the eighteenth century to rebuild what the genius of Henry IV. had established in twelve years of wise government, and what Louis XIV. had pulled down in thirty-four years. Let us see now who were the makers of the Edict of Toleration. There were three principal agencies: (1) the leaders of the Protestant congregations and their addresses; (2) the demands of public opinion; (3) the help given by the leaders of the American revolution to the Huguenots.

The first use that the Protestant congregations, restored and reorganized by Antoine Court, made of their recovered synods was to ask from the king the reestablishment of their former liberty. On disobeying the royal edicts which forbade any form of worship, any preaching, the leaders felt bound, like the early Christians under the Roman emperors, to apologize for their behavior and to explain that, nevertheless, they ought not to be mistaken for rebels, since they meant to remain loyal to their king. For instance, in 1746 Antoine Court, by order of the synod of 1746, composed a great apology, which was revised by the ministers of the refugees in Holland. In this he asserted, not only the loyalty, but the love, of the Huguenots for the king of France. The same synod ordered all churches to keep

a fast and to say prayers for the recovery of Louis XV., then severely ill. In 1747 another memoir of their claims was sent to the court of Versailles, but it was not answered. After 1755, besides the deputy-general, du Plan, who lived at London and interceded through the Protestant powers, the French Protestants had in Paris a secret agent, who was very probably helped by a committee of influential persons, and who applied to Count St. Florentin, the minister intrusted with Huguenot affairs, to redress the most crying injustices, and secure, for instance, the deliverance of the Huguenot galley slaves. The office was held by Leconte de Marcillac, an officer of the Conti regiment, who procured the interview between the prince of Conti and Paul Rabaut in April, 1755, and afterward by Court de Gébeline, the son of Antoine Court, who, by his reputation as a philologist and his connection with all the learned men of Paris, was able frequently to procure the pardon of condemned Huguenots.

In 1774 the Protestant churches, on Gébeline's suggestion, sent a new request to the king, in which, after having recalled the loyalty of their fathers to Henry IV., then to Louis XIII. during the civil war of the Fronde, and, lastly, to Louis XV. during the war of 1746, they added these touching words: "The only fault we are guilty of is to celebrate our worship of God despite the edicts forbidding it. However, can this disobedience, which seems to us legitimate, appear as a crime in your eyes? Nothing is purer than our purpose. We should like to reconcile what we are responsible for to our conscience with what we are responsible for to your authority."

But none of these requests moved the corrupt heart of Louis XV. The resolutions of the assemblies of the Gallican church succeeded in checking all the efforts of the synods and of the leaders of our churches. They had to wait for another and more humane king.

Fortunately, they were not alone in that hard struggle for religious liberty. The spirit of all Europe worked to the same end, and we shall now see how they found powerful allies in France, too, in the so-called "philosophers." Montesquieu and Voltaire were in the eighteenth century the two foremost champions of toleration. The former, in his *Lettres Persanes* (1728), having quoted the example of Persia, which, by proscribing Guebras and Armenians, caused its agriculture and industry to be ruined, says: "Reasoning without prejudice, I do not know that it would not be better that there should be several religions in a kingdom. It has been observed that people following religions only tolerated prove more useful to their country than those belonging

to the church of the majority; because, being excluded from public charges, they perform the most difficult duties of society." Is not this a clear allusion to the condition of the Huguenots?

Voltaire was the most obstinate advocate of toleration in that time. As a young man he extolled Admiral Coligny's heroism in his poem of *Henriade* (1722), and stigmatized the fanatical policy of Catherine de Medici, which brought on the massacre of St. Bartholomew forty years afterward. When an old man he pleaded with juvenile vigor the cause of Calas's memory and of the exiled Sirven, two Protestants unjustly condemned to death by the parliament of Toulouse, and secured from the parliament of Paris and from the government the reversal of the verdicts. One must read his Letters to his Friends to understand how near to his heart lay the cause of the oppressed French Protestants. Here are some extracts: "We must absolutely draw the truth from that Toulousian well! We ought to rouse all Europe, in order that its shouts of indignation may strike like thunder the ears of the judges. I will give up this cause only on dying." And after the private council had quashed the verdict at the court at Toulouse, he cried: "The family of Calas will get justice. As for the galley slaves, it will require a little more time and skill. I am always working for liberty of conscience and liberty of trade, two things which, in my opinion, ought never to be separated. The revision of the Calas suit will procure to you Huguenots a toleration which you have never enjoyed since the revocation of the edict of Nantes. I know, indeed, that you will be damned in the future world, but it does not seem to me right that you be persecuted in the present."

The economists and the contributors to the "Encyclopedia" were no less in favor of the repeal of the Edict of *Revocat*, because, like Vauban and Count de Boulainvillers, they knew what heavy losses the emigration, caused by that act and by the later complementary edicts, had inflicted on the public wealth of France. One above all, Turgot, is worth quoting, because he proclaimed the maxims of liberty with a clearness and fulness that have not been surpassed even by the champions of the French Revolution. In his "Letters on Toleration" in the *Conciliator* he started from Christ's toleration and from the maxims of the holy Fathers, and severed at once, sharply, all civil questions from matters concerning conscience. "Every civil meeting which is seditious should be forbidden. On the contrary, every religious assembly should be permitted. Every man is able to discern the truth of religion. Did Louis XIV. know more about these matters

than Le Clerc or Grotius? No religion has the right to require any other protection than that of liberty; moreover, a religion loses all its privileges when its dogmas or rights are contrary to the interests of the state. It is most dangerous to rally all men to the defense of the rights of conscience. No religion can claim anything more than the submission of the conscience. The state has no right to establish a religion as official, because religion is founded only on personal persuasion. The old maxim 'One land, one faith, one tongue,' has brought about only curses, like the crusade against the Albigenses, the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Whosoever will make religion a persecutor abuses it, because the characteristics of Christ's religion are gentleness and charity."

Consequently, when Turgot became minister of Louis XVI., he supported all measures in favor of the Protestants; for instance, he signed the acts to release the two Protestant galley slaves who were left on the king's galley (1774). Another class besides the philosophers and economists were, too, in favor of the improvement of the civic position of the Huguenots. They were the best men among lawyers and statesmen. I have already quoted the generous pleas of Servan and Rupert de Montclar in favor of the restitution of civil rights to the Huguenots. The proposal of Montclar dated from 1750, seventeen years after Gilbert de Voisin, attorney-general at the parliament of Paris, had composed two memoirs on the means of providing the Huguenots of France with the registration of their births, marriages, and deaths. In concluding, he asked for them two more privileges: (1) that they might be permitted to pray together with a few relatives, friends, and servants; and (2) that the governors should give to some trustworthy ministers safe conduct to perform their ministerial duties among private persons (1768). Lamoignon de Malesherbes, the grandson of the cruel Basville who persecuted the Huguenots in Languedoc, a friend of Turgot and of Dr. Benjamin Franklin, who became minister to Louis XVI.'s court in 1774, shared these views. He could not admit as compatible with justice or reason that a whole people should be condemned to see their children branded as bastards in order to punish them for the heresy of their fathers; and he wrote two memoirs on the marriages of Protestants, in which, although trying to save Louis XIV.'s memory from the reproach of injustice, he showed that the state of things in his reign was unworthy of a Christian nation (1785).

Baron de Breteuil, minister of the royal house, and De Vergennes, the able minister of foreign affairs, were of the same opinion. The

former presented to the king, Louis XVI., a memoir on the position of the Calvinists in France, the causes of their sufferings, and the remedies which should be employed.

As for Gravier de Vergennes, although brought up, like Voltaire, by the Jesuits, and a zealous Roman Catholic, he resolutely pleaded the cause of the Huguenots at the private council. "He persistently urged," says M. de Hennin, "the necessity of amending the mistakes made by Louis XIV., which had brought so much suffering upon France. He took so much interest in the question of procuring civic rights for the non-Catholics that he conceived the worst opinion of those who tried to thwart the fatherly purpose of the king in this matter. He did not believe that one could be a Christian and a Frenchman without wishing that so large a part of our people should no longer have the choice between humiliation at home and exile."

Is not this a beautiful testimony of a contemporary both to his patriotism and to his liberal ideas? You will not wonder that such a man was the minister who signed the treaty of friendship between France and the rising republic of the United States of North America.

But all these efforts would not have succeeded, perhaps, if the friendly intercourse between America and France had not brought to Paris men who knew the value of religious liberty, and how worthy of it were the French Huguenots. I refer, of course, to Benjamin Franklin and the later delegates who came to conclude the treaty with England. Franklin very soon became at Paris a great favorite, not only among scholars—he had been elected a member of our Academy of Sciences for his researches in electricity—but also among the students and other young Frenchmen. His house at Passy was the rendezvous of all people who were concerned with the advancement of science or the improvement of the moral conditions of mankind. His personal appearance added to the influence exerted by his superior mind. He was the first gentleman who wore no wig, and everybody, especially the young men, greatly admired his flowing white hair. It is a characteristic feature of that great citizen that, in addition to the questions he had to deal with, he pleaded for that miserable people of outlaws, the Huguenots, and interceded on their behalf with the ministers of Louis XVI. "The Protestants," so writes Bachaumont in his diary, on the 24th of November, 1778, "are expecting a settlement of their legal condition. The parliament [of Paris] is dealing with this matter, the ministers have won over some Roman Catholic prelates, and the influence which Necker enjoys [he was then secretary of the treasury],



joined to Dr. Franklin's solicitations, will be sufficient to silence the cries of the Roman Catholic clergy." From another document we know that Dr. Franklin received a Protestant minister of Poitou, Jarousseau, and introduced him, for a similar purpose, to Malesherbes, and perhaps to the king himself.<sup>1</sup>

Four years later came the four American delegates who were commissioned to arrange the terms of the treaty with England. Two of them, Jay and Laurens, were descendants of Huguenot refugees, and although we find no documentary evidence, it is yet very probable that they were not inactive in the matter in which their French coreligionists were so much concerned. As for Jay, we will soon give an indirect proof of this assumption. But the man who, although not acting openly, was directing the whole negotiation was none less than George Washington, and here we have direct proof from Lafayette's memoirs and letters. Every American knows the true friendship which had sprung up between these two men so different as to age and character. One thing united their hearts: a common love for liberty and justice. Therefore their private conversation — especially during the visit which Lafayette made at Mount Vernon, in the autumn of 1784 — must often have turned on the "great French injustice," viz., the persecution of the Huguenots; and Washington had no difficulty in persuading his young friend that it would be an act worthy of his name to rescue them from this kind of captivity. Lafayette, indeed, directly after he came back, set to work, and on May 11, 1788, was able to write to Washington: "The French Protestants are oppressed by an intolerable despotism. Although there is at present no open persecution, they are yet at the mercy of every whim of the king, of the queen, of the parliament, or of a minister of state. Their marriages are not legal; their wills without legal validity; their children branded as bastards; their persons only worthy of the halter. I should like to bring about a change in their condition, and for that purpose I will, under some pretense, with the permission of M. de Castries and of another (probably Malesherbes), visit their principal seats. Afterward I will try to get the support of M. de Vergennes and of the parliament, together with the help of the lord chancellor. This work requires much time, and is not without trouble for me, because nobody would give me a written command or support me openly. Nevertheless I will venture it.

"Do not reply to me in this matter, except to say that you have received my letter in cipher, brought by Mr. Adams. But when, in

<sup>1</sup> See PELLEToux, *Le pasteur du désert*.

the course of the autumn or the winter, you hear that something has been done, I wish you to know that I shared in the work."

Is it not thus evident that Washington was much concerned in the condition of the Huguenots in France? Lafayette, indeed, during the summer of 1785, made a journey to Montpellier, where he made the acquaintance of M. de Poitevin, a Protestant astronomer, and to Nismes. In the latter place he had an interview with Paul Rabaut and his son, Rabaut Saint Étienne, to whom he suggested to go to Paris and see Malesherbes, who was preparing the bill for the civic rights of the Protestants. We are told that Lafayette even attended a meeting at the Desert, and was so much delighted by all that he saw and heard that he kissed the venerable M. Paul. He then forwarded the news to Washington, who gave him the following advice: "My most ardent wishes attend your enterprise. But do remember, my dear friend, that it is a part of the strategic art to reconnoiter the field before advancing too far ahead. One has often done more in making progressive trenches than with an assault by open force." In October, 1786, Lafayette wrote to his wise adviser: "You will be pleased to hear that I expect confidently to see the condition of the Huguenots much improved. Not, indeed, as much as it ought to be, but, at least, the cruel laws of Louis XIV. will be greatly amended." Three months afterward Lafayette wrote again to Washington: "It is not probable that the matter concerning the Huguenots will be put before the Assembly of Notables, because it might be checked there by the claim of the clergy and of a bigoted party. We shall reach our aim by some means, and soon, as I hope. Nothing prevents the king, if he disdains the complaints of the opposing members, from solving that important problem himself. Since we have the disadvantage of the royal power, let us at least use it for our purpose. It would be the easier, as the Roman Catholic clergy, if not consulted, would not try to oppose, and as a more liberal system would promote the public welfare."

And, at last, on May 3, 1787, Lafayette wrote to John Jay, then secretary of state: "On the last day of our session (of the Assembly of Notables) I was fortunate in making in my committee (*bureau*) two motions which were almost unanimously voted: the one for the sake of the French Protestant citizens and the other for the revision of our criminal laws. I send you the resolution voted by our board, as it was presented by our president, Count d'Artois, to the king, who accepted it kindly. I was the more glad, as a similar proposition

concerning the position of the Protestants had been checked in the parliament. We are so far from religious liberty that, even when we speak about toleration, we must be careful of our words. I was generously supported by a learned and virtuous Roman Catholic prelate, the bishop of Langres." Here is an abstract of the latter's speech: "I support General Lafayette's motion with other reasons than his own. He spoke as a philosopher; I shall speak as a bishop. Now, I say that I like Protestant services in churches more than in camp-meetings, and ordained ministers more than lay exhorters."

As Lafayette said that the victory was won only after a long struggle, we have, now, to go back some ten years in order to explain the preparation for the Edict of Tolerance. The question of the civic rights of the Protestant citizens had been put almost at the same time under consideration of the privy council and of the parliament of Paris. Legouvé, a barrister, presented a request on their behalf before the former; and councilor de Bretignères before the latter. We do not know the result of Legouvé's request; but as for the parliament, which for twenty years had settled as a rule of jurisprudence that whosoever would contest the legitimacy of children the issue of Protestant marriages was not to be heard, it gave a favorable ear to Bretignère's speech. Consequently, it expressed to the king the wish that the births, marriages, and deaths of the non-Catholics should be registered by other officers than the Roman Catholic. But in vain. The influence of the Roman Catholic clergy, which was very rich, especially at a time when the civic power wanted money in order to cover the deficit, was still powerful, and, in spite of the efforts of Franklin, Bretignère, Lacretelle, and others, the king sent an order to the parliament to deal no more with this matter (December 3, 1778). The Roman Catholic clergy were exulting over their adversaries, and through the medium of Mgr. Dulau, archbishop of Arles, presented to the king a memoir thundering forth against what they called the "bold enterprises of the Huguenots," and they drew from the weak Louis XVI. the promise that "he would always oppose the establishment of any other than the Roman Catholic worship." Nevertheless, under the pressure of public opinion and of the continued efforts of the American delegates, the matter was again taken under consideration before the parliament of Paris by Robert de Saint Vincent, a chancellor of the grand chamber. Referring to the wishes of an Assembly of Notables (1626) and to the royal declarations of Louis XIII. (1627), he asked that the government should resume that equitable position toward the Calvinists and, according

to Louis XIV.'s promise, should solve the question of the civic registration of their marriages and births. After a short deliberation, parliament decided that St. Vincent's speech should be spread upon the records of parliament, and that the first president should call upon the king and entreat him to grant civic rights to the Protestants. At the same time, Louis XVI. had received from Baron de Breteuil and Malesherbes, then ministers of state, reports with full information concerning the matter. You know the rest. A motion similar to that brought before parliament was proposed by Lafayette, and carried by the Assembly of Notables (May 24), and on November 19, 1787—a memorable day in Huguenot history—Louis XVI., attended by the princes and peers of the kingdom of France, came to the court of parliament to present the Edict on the Civic Rights of Protestants, which had been prepared by Baron de Breteuil and Lamoignon de Malesherbes. What a significant circumstance it was that the Act of Toleration and Justice was for a great part the work of the grandson of that cruel Lamoignon de Basville who for thirty years had been the implacable persecutor of the Huguenots in Languedoc! As his Roman Catholic friends rebuked him for being too much in favor of the Protestants, Malesherbes answered, smiling: "My grandfather did so much harm to them. May I not be allowed to be kind to them?" And on the same day he had as guests at his house Rabaut St. Étienne, the young Protestant minister, and General Lafayette.

The edict of 1787 consisted of thirty-seven articles. Of the most important ones we mention: Art. I, which runs as follows: "The Roman Catholic apostolic religion will continue to enjoy alone the privilege of public worship in our kingdom. The births, marriages, and deaths of our subjects who belong to it can, in no case, be registered otherwise than according to the rites and usages of said religion."

As for the Protestants, they obtained four concessions, viz.:

(1) They were permitted to live in France and to practice trades or industries, without being troubled for the sake of their religion.

(2) They were allowed to celebrate legal marriages before certain officers of justice.

(3) The births of their children must be registered by the royal judges.

(4) Measures were taken for the burial of those who could not be buried according to the Roman Catholic rite.

The parliament of Paris not only voted the edict, but also made some useful additions to it, viz.: (1) It revoked the barbarous laws which had been made against the Protestant ministers and the so-called "relapsed

heretics." (2) It provided ways for the restitution to Huguenots of possessions and property unjustly forfeited. (3) It provided that the Huguenots should be no more required to show the certificates of Roman Catholics for the practice of trades; but, strangely enough, they were excluded from all appointments as judges, teachers, or aldermen.

On the whole, the edict of November 19, 1787, was a great act of justice and of good-will toward the Protestant dissenters, who had been treated so long as outlaws and rebels. It reflects great credit on the king and on the queen, Marie Antoinette, who had shown interest in the condition of the Protestants as the worthy sister of Emperor Joseph II. of Austria, and on the ministers of state and the councilors of parliament who had shared in its preparation. It was highly approved on both sides of the Atlantic, in France and America, and indeed everywhere where hearts could beat for liberty and humanity; and, shame to say! was criticised only by an assembly of Roman Catholic clergy (1788). A prelate, the bishop of La Rochelle, through a circular letter, even advised his clergy to disobey the edict. It was, of course, among the Protestants that the edict was received with shouts of applause, because it opened to them a new era of liberty and justice, after a long period of injustice and oppression. The things foretold by the Cevenol prophets were realized. From the remotest parts of southern France you could see Protestant families, sometimes old, white-haired men and women, coming with their children and grandchildren to the royal judge, in order to have their marriages and those of their sons and daughters registered. The joy overflowed all hearts. Rabaut St. Étienne thought it necessary to send a circular letter to eighty ministers or elders in the Languedoc, advising them to refrain from public signs of rejoicing, lest they should offend their Roman Catholic neighbors and lead to riots. The old Huguenot ministers, who had for a long time preached in the Desert secretly, the venerable Paul Rabaut, Vernezobre, and others, who had escaped the sword hanging over their head, could now sing Simeon's hymn, "*Nunc demitte servum tuum!*" But certainly, in their thanksgiving, they did not forget the powerful support given to them by their American brethren in the most fitting way. Another link of friendship had been made between France and America. While the Americans owed their political liberty partly to the assistance of France, the French nation in turn owed religious freedom chiefly to the efforts of the leaders of the American revolution.

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